

Government claws back cash from the dying

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A LITTLE-KNOWN government department is stealing from sick and dying people, according to the campaign group Clydeside Action on Asbestos.

The Newcastle-based Compensation Recovery Unit, a division of the Department of Social Security, was set up under the 1989 Social Security Act to claw back money from awards to victims of personal injury.

The scandal came to light when the CRU demanded £6,000 from an ex-shipyard worker who won £30,000 for loss of earnings after contracting the deadly disease mesothelioma, caused by asbestos.

Jim, who does not want his full name revealed, fought for two years for compensation from his former employer and eventually accepted an out-of-court award because he feared he would not live long enough to see the case through the legal system.

He was paid benefit while fighting his case, but as soon as his award was settled the CRU reclaimed the money the DSS had given him — despite the fact that his award had been



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